

Kim, the 9th typhoon of the season, originated in an active near-equatorial trough (NET), which extended through the western Marshall Islands. Weak surface circulations existed within this trough near Ponape and Kwajalein. During the 2nd of November, this activity had consolidated into a single surface circulation 100 nm (185 km) southwest of Ponape with a central pressure of 1007 mb. The disturbance began moving northwestward within the NET at approximately 6 kt (11 km/hr).

At 2155Z on the 3rd, satellite first fixed the disturbance and estimated the winds to be 20 kt (10 m/sec). A circulation center was located 150 nm (270 km) northwest of Ponape. With the weekend approaching, a formation alert was issued on the 4th as satellite and synoptic data indicated a strengthening surface circulation. Aircraft reconnaissance the next day found a central pressure of 1007 mb and estimated a maximum surface wind of 20 kt (10 m/sec). As the disturbance continued northwestward toward a broad, relative weakness in the strong mid-tropospheric subtropical ridge, synoptic and satellite data still indicated no significant development. Potential for development remained fair to good and the formation alert was therefore extended for 24 hours. A second aircraft investigation on the 6th fixed the system with a 1004 mb central pressure and maximum surface winds of about 25 kt (13 m/sec). Kim's first warning as TD 19 was issued at 0600Z on the 6th. The system was upgraded to Tropical Storm Kim just 12 hours later.

Kim next turned toward Guam at a speed of approximately 10 kt (19 km/hr). Slow intensification occurred during the next 48 hours due to the dominating presence of the strong subtropical ridge to the north. A short wave trough in the upper tropospheric westerlies also hampered rapid development by restricting outflow to the north of Kim. However, after the trough passed by, outflow aloft steadily strengthened. A deepening long wave trough over eastern Asia was now beginning to weaken the subtropical ridge which was previously suppressing Kim's low level development. Satellite data at 080204Z indicated increased organization (Fig. 4-23). Kim began intensifying at the rate of 30 kt (15 m/sec) in 24 hours and the central pressure dropped 22 mb in a 24 hour period.

Kim passed directly over Guam on 8 November between 1020Z and 1235Z approaching Guam from the east-southeast, moving westward over the island, and exiting toward the west-northwest. The eye entered with a circular configuration and exited with an elliptical configuration. Figure 4-24 depicts eye passage as seen by radar while Figure 4-25 displays the barograph trace recorded at Andersen AFB, Guam. The duration of the eye passage over the island lasted up to 1 hour and 10 minutes near the center of the storm track. The peak gust recorded was 77 kt (40 m/sec) on Nimitz Hill. The greatest damage was in the southern end of the island where 22 homes were damaged or destroyed (Figs. 4-26 and 4-27). Fortunately, no lives were lost on Guam.

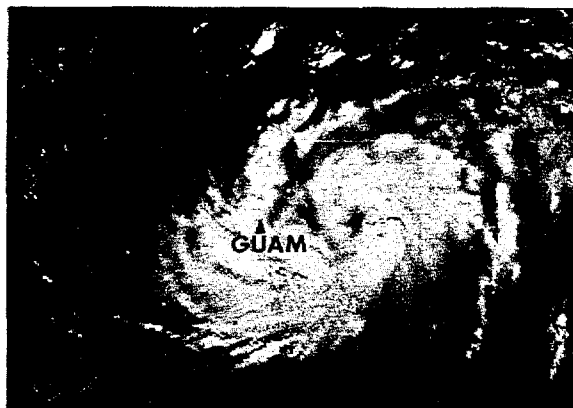


FIGURE 4-23. Kim at 50 kt (26 m/sec) intensity, rapidly intensifying, and heading for Guam, 8 November 1977, 0204Z. (DMSP imagery)

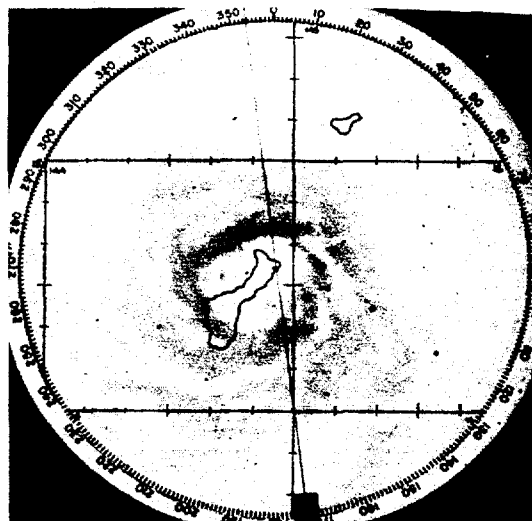


FIGURE 4-24. Air Weather Service radar presentation of Kim at 60 kt (31 m/sec) intensity with the eye over Guam, 8 November 1977, approximately 1130Z. (Photograph courtesy of Det 2, 1WWG, Andersen AFB, Guam.)

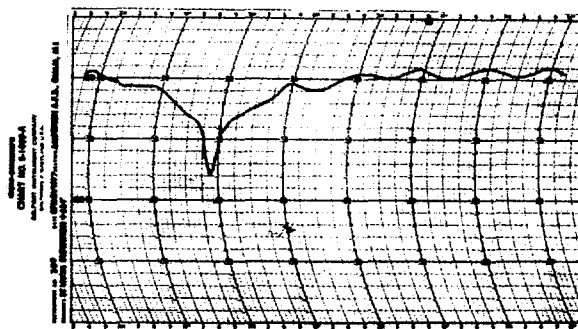


FIGURE 4-25. Reproduction of the barograph trace from Andersen AFB, Guam during eye passage of Kim. The center passed approximately 8 nm (15 km) south of Andersen AFB.



FIGURE 4-26. Kim's nearly typhoon strength winds battered the exposed, coastal village of Umatac. (Photograph courtesy of P. J. Ryan of the Pacific Daily News.)

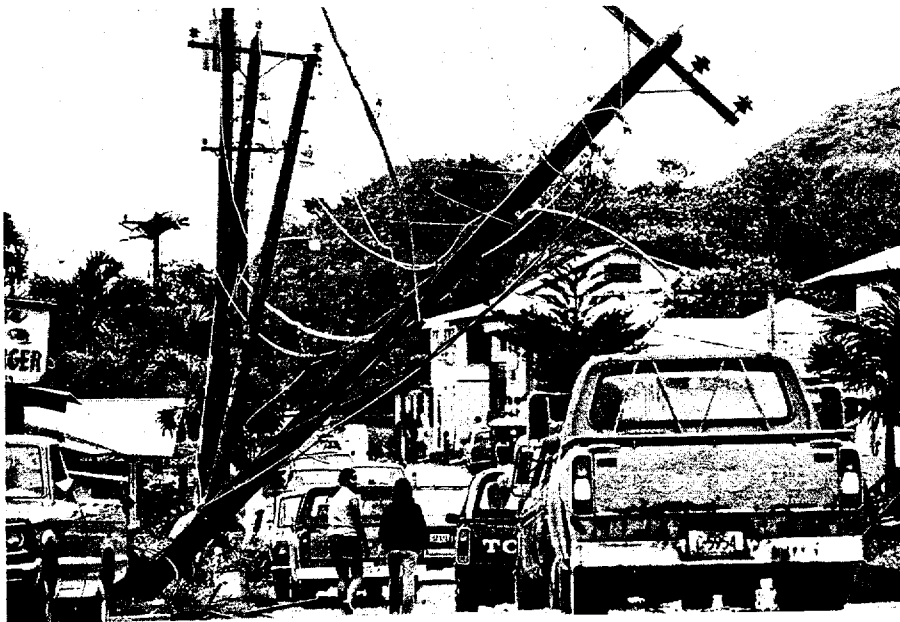


FIGURE 4-27. Although damage was slight on most of the island, Umatac Village on the southwest coast did not fare so well. (Photograph courtesy of P. J. Ryan of the Pacific Daily News.)

Kim was upgraded to typhoon strength at 2200 local on the 8th just after exiting Guam. For the next 48 hours the storm continued to intensify. The subtropical ridge continued to slowly weaken throughout this period, but it maintained sufficient strength to steer Kim in a west-northwestward direction. Moving at approximately 15 kt (28 km/hr), Kim advanced toward another weakness in the ridge located between two subtropical high pressure cells. As the tropospheric steering flow weakened, forward speed decreased and intensification increased. When Kim was nearest this weakness within the ridge, she attained a speed minimum, 5 kt (9 km/hr), and an intensity maximum of 125 kt (64 m/sec) (Fig. 4-28).

Kim now took on a more westward track as she came under the influence of the next subtropical high cell. Kim was also gradually approaching a deep, quasi-stationary, upper tropospheric trough over Asia. This trough produced strong southwesterly flow which began to restrict outflow ahead of Kim resulting in decreasing intensity. At the same time, a deepening low cell in the Tropical Upper Tropospheric Trough (TUTT) was slowly approaching Kim from the east. This low cell eventually came in position to enhance upper level outflow. A secondary maximum intensity, 120 kt (62 m/sec), was achieved from this interaction.

Kim was soon headed straight for central Luzon (Fig. 4-29). Landfall occurred on the 13th causing extensive damage on the coastline with winds of 115 kt (59 m/sec). The storm passed about 35 nm (65 km) north of Manila and 5 nm (9 km) south of Clark AB.

The typhoon exited into the South China Sea 7 hours after landfall with an intensity of 65 kt (33 m/sec). This amount of weakening is in good agreement with the latest climatological studies of intense typhoons crossing Luzon. Even though the South China Sea still had warm sea surface temperatures, Kim never reintensified due to strong, cool northeast monsoon flow entraining into the storm environment. By this time the mid-latitude westerlies had sufficiently weakened the subtropical ridge which separated Kim from the westerlies. Rapidly decelerating, Kim turned northward in response to the steady southwesterly steering flow being produced by an approaching upper tropospheric trough. Increased upper level shearing began the storm's extratropical transformation. Turning northward, Kim entered deeper westerly flow and was accelerated northeastward through the Bashi Channel. Kim became an extratropical system by 0000Z on the 17th and merged with a weak frontal system east of Taiwan.

Kim was a long-lived storm with 44 warnings issued during a 12 day period. Guam sustained moderate property damage when Kim crossed the island as a strong tropical storm. Luzon, however, reported 55 drownings due to widespread flooding. In Manila, a fire in a hotel, caused by a lighted candle, during the height of the storm resulted in 47 deaths. Minor damage occurred at Clark AB with a roof blown from a school building and falling trees causing other damage. One ship was reported sunk while another went aground as Kim exited into the South China Sea.

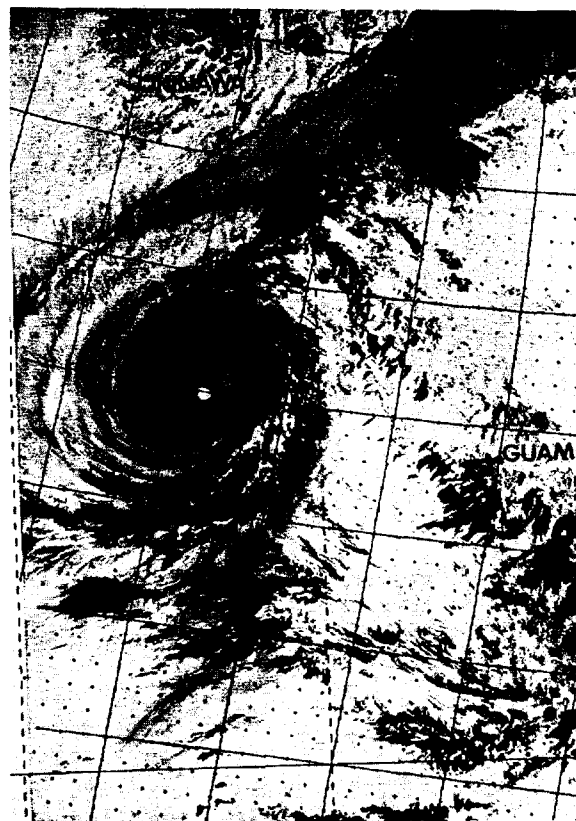


FIGURE 4-28. Infrared photograph of Typhoon Kim at peak intensity of 125 kt (64 m/sec), 10 November 1977, 2145Z. (DMSP imagery)

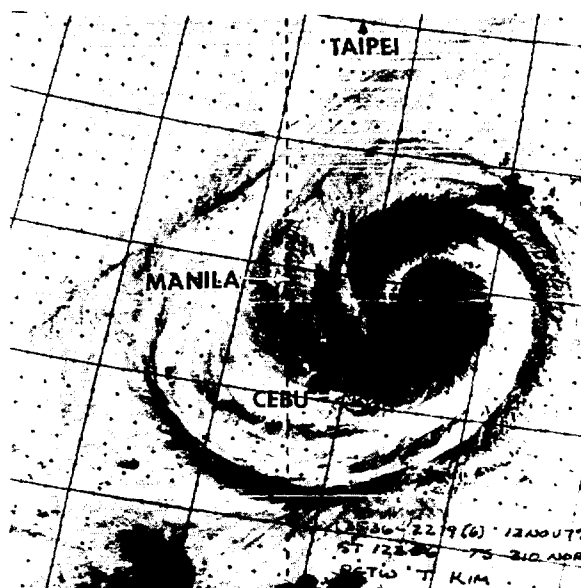


FIGURE 4-29. Infrared photograph of Typhoon Kim with 110 kt (57 m/sec) winds about 20 hours before landfall on the Philippine Islands, 12 November 1977, 2255Z. (DMSP imagery)